

Thank you to the BLM, to the Department of the Interior, thank you to all of the Wyoming citizens who are here today, who are my neighbors, my friends, my high school classmates. Thank you for allowing me to serve you as the State Superintendent, and thank you for standing shoulder to shoulder in favor of our past, our present, and our future in Wyoming. As State Superintendent, I'm one of five officials who sits on the State Board of Land Commissioners as well as the State Loan and Investment Board. And as State Superintendent, I work a percent of the time advocating for our schools, for our educators, for our students, and for families across the State. I'll be brief with my comments. I choose to be here today because I grew up in coal country. My father was a dentist. My mother was a nurse in Campbell County. My father served the mining community for over years. Miners, again, were my friends, my neighbors, my classmates, tied to every aspect of my upbringing and of my community. Mining has been our past, our present, and we would like for it to be our future even if looks different. We stand together today to ask you for a slower pace, for a chance to innovate without the heavy hand that is coming down on us every day and devastating our state. Coal is the main revenue source for school capital construction. In fact, the lease bonuses have paid for new school buildings and major maintenance in our state since. Even the smallest communities in our state have excellent facilities and equitable opportunities for students to succeed because of coal devastating our state. Since our state has spent over \$. billion on school facilities. We've built new schools, and we've modernized an additional . This was paid for almost entirely with coal lease bonus money. Recently, Wyoming was ranked eighth in the nation and best in the West for quality of education. The quality of our education could not be as high as it is without the mining revenue and because of our way of life that the mining industry has carved out for us in Wyoming. Mining has allowed Wyoming to pay higher wages for our teachers and to our para-professionals in schools. It's allowed us to pay percent of our education costs, special education costs, percent of our school transportation costs, and percent of our school construction since 2003. Now, realize in other rural states, funding of these activities, funding these items is difficult at best. Schools in small communities have closed. Small communities have dried

up and withered away. Rural states have struggled to provide a quality education to students, but because of coal, Wyoming has ensured opportunities for students all across our state and especially in our smallest communities like other states have not been able. We have reached a point where the restrictions and the regulations have outpaced any opportunity for us, for the industry to continue to work and adapt, and it has directly put thousands of hard-working families out of work. It is bankrupting our state, and it doesn't need to happen that way. I respectfully ask you to slow down the stifling regulatory effort, to lift the moratoriums that are in place on coal production and mining and to give us the chance to continue to grow and to adapt to the industry at a reasonable pace and a reasonable rate as we have done for years in response to the increasing scrutiny and the increasing demands of the industry and of our world. Thank you so much for this opportunity to stand shoulder to shoulder with the State of Wyoming.